

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 03404 211104Z  
ACTION NODS-00

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AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T BEIRUT 3404

EXDIS TREAT AS NODIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y T E X T

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PBOR PORG MARR UNSC IS LE  
SUBJ: SOUTH LEBANON: ISRAELI INTENTIONS

1. SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR FILLS FONMIN BOUTROS IN ON OUR DEMARCHES TO ISRAELIS RE CHRISTIAN MILITIA. BOUTROS ASKS FOR OUR ASSESSMENT OF ISRAELI WILLINGNESS PERMIT LEBANESE ARMY MOVE SOUTH. DESCRIBES SYRIAN ATTITUDE AS POSITIVE AND PLO'S AS NOT NEGATIVE. END SUMMARY.

2. CALLED ON FONMIN BOUTROS AT HIS HOME EVENING JUNE 20 TO PAY RESPECTS ON MY RETURN FROM CONSULTATION AND LEAVE AND TO FILL HIM IN ON OUR DEMARCHES TO ISRAELIS IN TEL AVIV AND WASHINGTON REGARDING CHRISTIAN MILITIAS IN SOUTH. SAID AMBASSADOR LEWIS HAD BEEN TOLD BY WEIZMAN ON SUNDAY NIGHT NOT TO WORRY, EVERYTHING WAS UNDER CONTROL AND TO SEE HOW NEXT 48 HOURS WENT.

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3. BOUTROS NOTED THAT 48 HOURS WERE UP. WHAT COULD WE REPORT? I SAID WE WERE STILL A LITTLE CONFUSED ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT HADDAD CONTROLLED MILITIAS, BUT WE GATHERED THAT SIILASVUO, ALTHOUGH HE THOUGHT SITUATION WAS STILL SERIOUS, FELT PROGRESS WAS BEING MADE. PERHAPS SITUATION WOULD BE CLEARER IN ANOTHER 24 OR 48 HOURS.

4. BOUTROS THEN ASKED WHETHER ISRAELIS WERE REALLY PREPARED FOR LEBANESE ARMY TO ENTER THE SOUTH. HE ASKED QUESTION BECAUSE CHAMOUN OPPOSED THEIR ENTRY, AND BOUTROS ALWAYS SUSPECTED THAT CHAMOUN'S CONTACTS WITH ISRAELIS WERE INFLUENCING HIS ACTIONS ON DOMESTIC SCENE. WHILE CHAMOUN'S OPPOSITION TO MOVEMENT OF THE ARMY MIGHT BE FOR HIS OWN DOMESTIC REASONS, IT MIGHT REFLECT INSTRUCTIONS HE WAS GETTING FROM ISRAELIS.

5. BOUTROS SAID GOL WANTED TO MOVE TROOPS SOUTH, BUT IT WAS STILL CONCERNED ABOUT LIKELIHOOD OF CLASH WITH MILITIAS. ISRAELIS CONTROLLED THOSE MILITIAS AND COULD MAKE THEM BEHAVE. IF ISRAELIS WERE SIMPLY GOING THROUGH CHARADE TO PERMIT THEM TO REOCCUPY PART OF SOUTH LEBANON, THERE WAS NO PURPOSE TO BE SERVED BY SENDING LEBANESE TROOPS TO SOUTH ONLY TO HAVE THEM CLASH WITH MILITIAS. IF, ON OTHER HAND, ISRAELIS WANTED LEBANESE TO REESTABLISH THEIR AUTHORITY THERE, AND WERE PREPARED TO COOPERATE, SOMETHING COULD BE WORKED OUT.

6. I NOTED THAT SITUATION OBVIOUSLY HAD CHANGED SINCE I LEFT IN MAY. AT THAT TIME GOL CONCERN WAS ABOUT PALESTINIANS. NOW IT SEEMED TO BE EXCLUSIVELY ABOUT MILITIAS. WHAT WAS CURRENT PALESTINIAN ATTITUDE? BOUTROS SAID PLO WAS "COMPELLED FOR VARIOUS REASONS" TO COOPERATE. HE DID NOT DOUBT THEY WOULD HAVE FUTURE PROBLEMS WITH PLO, BUT FOR THE MOMENT ITS ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ARMY WAS "NOT NEGATIVE".

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7. I ASKED ABOUT SYRIANS. BOUTROS SAID THEIR ATTITUDE WAS POSITIVE, AND THEY WERE NOW IN A POSITION TO EXERCISE PRESSURE ON PALESTINIANS AND WERE DOING SO. THE ONLY REASON THE ARMY WAS NOT MOVING WAS THE MILITIA PROBLEM.

8. I SAID I HAD IMPRESSION ISRAELIS DID WANT REESTABLISHMENT OF LEBANESE AUTHORITY IN SOUTH, BUT IF LEBANESE WANTED AUTHORITATIVE ANSWER, WE WOULD HAVE TO POSE QUESTION TO ISRAELIS. BOUTROS SAID HE DID NOT WANT US TO DO SO, BECAUSE ISRAELIS MIGHT SEEK DELIBERATELY TO MISLEAD LEBANESE BY THEIR ANSWER. RATHER, HE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE AMBASSADOR LEWIS'S ASSESSMENT ON ISRAELI INTENTIONS. I SAID I WOULD FORWARD HIS REQUEST. WE AGREED TO MEET AGAIN ON FRIDAY, AND HE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A RESPONSE BY THEN.

9. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH IT IS RISKY TO GIVE ASSESSMENTS OF ISRAELI INTENTIONS TO THIRD PARTIES, PERHAPS TEL AVIV FEELS ISRAELI POSITION ON THIS ISSUE IS CLEAR ENOUGH TO BE CONVEYED BY US. BOUTROS OBVIOUSLY HAS NO CONFIDENCE IN ANYTHING ISRAELIS MAY SAY TO LEBANESE DIRECTLY VIA ILMAC OR OTHER CHANNELS BECAUSE OF ISRAELI INVOLVEMENT WITH ENEMIES OF THE

REGIME. HE NEEDS SOME REASSURANCES FROM US. ANYTHING  
SAM LEWIS FEELS HE CAN SAFELY SAY ON SUBJECT BEFORE FRIDAY  
WILL BE APPRECIATED. (I NOTED, INCIDENTALLY, INTELLIGENCE  
REPORTS INDICATING THAT THE SYRIANS ARE NOT BEING AS HELPFUL  
AS BOUTROS SAID THEY WERE AND HAVE A TERRIBLY JADED SENSE  
OF DEJA VU ABOUT THIS EXCHANGE. I THINK WE SHOULD TAKE  
BOUTROS AT HIS WORD, HOWEVER, AND SEE HOW THIS STRING IS  
PLAYED OUT.)

PARKER

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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